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PSC 595.01: Legislative Relations

Jesse Munro

The University Of Montana, jesse.munro@umontana.edu

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Political Science 595
LEGISLATIVE RELATIONS
Fall 2009

Prof. Jesse Munro
Phone 406-431-0047
E-Mail: jesse.munro@mso.umt.edu

Office: Corbin 252
Office Hours: M, W, F 9 am - 11:30 am and
1 pm – 2 pm or by appointment
Class Location: On-line

Course Description:

Welcome to Legislative Relations. This course presents an overview of how to develop and maintain effective legislative relations as part of performing as a public manager. This course introduces the student to the workings of the legislative branch of government, the budget process, legislative protocol and testimony in committees. The course focuses on understanding the functions of the legislative branch with special attention given to drafting proposed legislation, preparing fiscal notes and preparing testimony for and against legislation. Additionally, students will be introduced to the importance of ethics, integrity, and decision making regarding legislative relations.

Course Objectives:

1. To acquire substantive knowledge and understanding of the workings of the legislative branch of government.
2. To develop the skills and abilities to establish working relations with legislators and their staff.
3. To gain an understanding of the complexities and protocols involved in proposing and developing public policy through the legislative process.

Required Readings:

There are required readings for each Learning Unit. The required readings are found under the "**Course Materials**" icon for this class.

Course Requirements:

Learning Units must be completed each Wednesday night by 7 pm (MST). Students are required to read the mini-lectures, all assigned readings, participate on the discussion board, and complete all writing assignments by the established times. Learning Units provide summary points based on what the instructor and authors are trying to emphasize as key elements for the student to learn and understand. These are not to be considered all-inclusive and the student is responsible for using these summary points in developing their understanding.

All time requirements for discussion board answers, papers, and projects will be based on Mountain Standard Time. The instructor will be online reviewing student responses to discussion board questions each Wednesday night from 7 to 9 pm (MST).

Writing Assignments

Five (5) writing assignments are required. The first and second writing assignments are to be three to five pages in length, double-spaced. The third writing assignment is your proposed draft legislation; the fourth is a completed fiscal note; and the fifth is your testimony both pro and con. Students are required to follow the instructions contained in the relevant Learning Unit for each assignment. Refer to Learning Unit 1 for writing assignment requirements.

Sources for Writing Assignments: Students are encouraged to utilize sources provided in and through the Mansfield Library.

Course Grading:

Grading is based on five (5) writing assignments and your responses to the Discussion Board questions. Writing Assignments 1, 2, 3, and 4 are worth 50 points each. Writing Assignment 5 is worth 100 points and your responses to the Discussion Board questions are worth 50 points for the semester, for a total of 350 points.

The Discussion Board requires active student participation and total Discussion Board points will be available at the end of the semester. If you are curious as to how you are doing on your Discussion Board questions during the semester, you may call or email the instructor. Refer to Learning Unit 1 for Discussion Board requirements.

Your grade will be determined as follows:

A =	326-350
A- =	315-325
B+ =	305-314
B =	291-304
B- =	280-290
C+ =	270-279
C =	256-269

This is a graduate level course and assignments and Discussion Board participation should reflect a graduate level of thought and effort. Assignments will be assessed (graded) based on your presentation of your knowledge and understanding of the concepts being presented. This includes your ability to interpret, comprehend, analyze, apply and explain these concepts. Have you grasped what the readings and mini-lectures have presented and can you apply it?

Discussion Board Questions will be assessed based on your response: 1) does it address the question asked; 2) does the response reflect an understanding of the concept or question; and 3) is it based not only on what you have been presented, but also includes insights that you have and can justify.

The Discussion Board provides each student with the opportunity for self-assessment. By reading others responses and discussing the topic with them on the Discussion Board, you can assess your understanding. The Discussion Board provides instant feed-back between students and the instructor.

Other Student Resources

There are other resources available to you on the Blackboard. At the top-left you will notice there is a link to The UMs Mansfield Library. You may also go to The UM website and click on "libraries." If you need assistance navigating through the Blackboard, you can click on the BB Tutorials tab next to the Mansfield Library tab. If you need ADA assistance in taking this course, you may contact the University of Montana Disability Services for Students at their website <http://life.umt.edu/dss> or email them at dss@umontana.edu. Students taking this course are expected to do so under the provisions set forth in the UM Student Conduct Code. You can review the SCC by visiting the website at <http://life.umt.edu/VPSA/name/StudentConductCode>. There is one new service available to you through The Writing Center...they now offer free one-on-one online tutoring "to all students seeking to become more effective writers. You can email them at onlinetutoring@umontana.edu or point your browser to <http://www.umt.edu/writingcenter>.

Weekly Assignments

Learning Unit 1 (Due 02 Sept 2009)

Introduction to Legislative Relations

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned readings and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Assigned Readings:

Legislator Handbook 2009, Montana Legislative Services Division, Chapter 2, Pages 2-6, Appendix B: Glossary of Commonly Used Terms, Pages 106-109; Appendix C: Acronyms and Abbreviations, Page 110

Bill Draft Request Information, Montana Legislative Services Division, Page 1.

Learning Unit 2 (Due 09 Sept 2009)

The Legislative Branch

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned reading, respond to the Discussion Board questions, and complete Writing Assignment 1.

Assigned Reading:

Legislator Handbook 2009, Montana Legislative Services Division, Chapter 3, Pages 7-19

Optional Reading:

Legislative Leadership: A Guide to Roles and Responsibilities, Montana Legislative Branch, Pages 1-4

Writing Assignment:

Writing Assignment 1 – Legislative Branch Offices - Due 09 September 2009 – See Learning Unit 2 or Writing Assignments on course menu for specific instructions.

Learning Unit 3 (Due 16 Sept 2009)

The Legislature

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned readings and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Assigned Readings:

American Politics and Government, Barbary Hinckley, Sheldon Goldman, Pages 75-79

Understanding Intergovernmental Relations, Deil Wright, Pages 281-295

Democracy Under Pressure, Milton Cummings Jr., David Wise, Pages 677-679

Legislator Handbook 2009, Montana Legislative Services Division, Chapter 5, Pages 25-28, Chapter 8, Pages 57-67, Chapter 12, Pages 89-91

Optional Reading:

Life After Sine Die: A Guide for Legislators to Interim Activities, Montana Legislative Branch, Pages 1-9

Learning Unit 4 (Due 23 Sept 2009)

Understanding Ethics

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned readings and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Assigned Readings:

Right and Wrong: A Brief Guide To Understanding Ethics, Thomas White, Pages 7-12; Pages 41-51; and Pages 61-71.

Legislator Handbook 2009, Montana Legislative Services Division, Chapter 4, Pages 20-24

Learning Unit 5 (Due 30 Sept 2009)

The Triad of Integrity

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned readings, respond to the Discussion Board questions, and complete Writing Assignment 2.

Assigned Reading:

Splitting the Difference: Compromise and Integrity in Ethics and Politics, Martin Benjamin, Pages 46-72
Legislator Handbook 2009, Montana Legislative Services Division, Chapter 6, Pages 29-36

Reminder:

Your proposed idea for legislation is due today 30 September 2009 – See Discussion Board Question 1

Writing Assignment:

Writing Assignment 2 – Ethics - Due 30 September 2009 – See Learning Unit 5 or Writing Assignments on course menu for specific instructions.

Learning Unit 6 (Due 07 Oct 2009)

Understanding Decision Making

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned readings and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Assigned Readings:

Public Administration: Concepts and Cases, Richard Stillman, Pages 220-234
Public Administration: Policy, Politics, and Practice, William Johnson, Pages 319-333

Learning Unit 7 (Due 14 Oct 2009)

**Special Interest Groups / Political Action
Committees / Lobbying**

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned readings, and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Assigned Readings:

American Politics and Government, Barbara Hinckley, Sheldon Goldman, Pages 126-156
Democracy Under Pressure, Milton Cummings Jr., David Wise, Pages 224-242
Legislator Handbook 2009, Montana Legislative Services Division, Chapter 10, Pages 78-82, Chapter 13, Pages 92-96

Learning Unit 8 (Due 21 Oct 2009)

Legislative Process – Bill Drafting

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned readings and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Assigned Readings:

We the People of Montana..., Lopach, McKinsey, Payne, Waldron, Calvert, Brown, Pages 70-81

Bill Drafting Manual 2008, Montana Legislative Services Division, Chapters 1-6, Pages 1-76

Legislator Handbook 2009, Montana Legislative Services Division, Chapter 7, Pages 37-56

Optional Reading:

From Idea to Introduction: A Guide For Legislators, Montana Legislative Branch, Pages 1-3

Learning Unit 9 (Due 28 Oct 2009)

Legislative Process – Bill Drafting

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned readings and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

Assigned Readings:

Bill Drafting Manual 2008, Montana Legislative Services Division, Chapters 7-10 and Appendix A-T, Pages 77-163

Optional Reading:

Administrative Rules: A Legislator's Guide, Montana Legislative Branch, Pages 1-2

Learning Unit 10 (Due 04 Nov 2009)

Fiscal Notes for Legislation

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned readings, respond to the Discussion Board questions and complete Writing Assignment 3 and Writing Assignment 4.

Assigned Readings:

Fiscal Note Training Manual, State of Montana Office of Budget and Program Planning, Pages 1-8

Fiscal Note Preparation, State of Montana Office of Budget and Program Planning, Pages 1-29

Writing Assignments:

Writing Assignment 3 – Proposed Legislation (Bill) (Draft) – and Writing Assignment 4 – Fiscal Note (Draft) – Due today 04 November 2009. See Learning Unit 10 or Assignments on course menu for specific instructions.

Learning Unit 11 (Due 11 Nov 2009)

Legislative Protocol and Testimony in Committees

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned reading, respond to the Discussion Board questions, and complete Writing Assignment 5.

Assigned Reading:

Legislator Handbook 2009, Montana Legislative Services Division, Chapter 9, Pages 68-77

Optional Reading:

Conference Committees: A Legislator's Guide to Reconciling Bill Differences Between Chambers, Montana Legislative Branch, Pages 1-2

Writing Assignment:

Writing Assignment 5 – Testimony Pro and Con (Draft) – Due today 11 November 2009 – Refer to Learning Unit 11 or Writing Assignment on course menu for specific instructions.

Learning Unit 12 (Due 18 Nov 2009)

Budget and the Legislature / EPP Process

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned readings, respond to the Discussion Board questions and submit final versions of Writing Assignment 3 and Writing Assignment 4.

Assigned Readings:

EPP Instructions, State of Montana Office of Budget and Program Planning, Pages 1-13

EPP Training Manual, State of Montana Office of Budget and Program Planning, Pages 1-15

MBARS (Montana Budget and Reporting System) Budget Submission Training Manual, State of Montana Office of Budget and Program Planning, Pages 1-26

Optional Reading:

Understanding State Finances and the Budgeting Process 2009, Legislative Fiscal Division, Pages 1-80

Writing Assignment:

Writing Assignment 3 - Proposed Legislation (Bill) **Final Version** and Writing Assignment 4 - Fiscal Note **Final Version** – Due today 18 November 2009.

Learning Unit 13 (Due 25 Nov 2009)

No Class Today - Thanksgiving

Learning Unit 14 (Due 02 Dec 2009)

Student Study

No mini-lecture, no assigned readings, or Discussion Board questions today. Submit final versions of Writing Assignment 5.

Writing Assignment:

Writing Assignment 5 – Testimony Pro and Con Final Versions – Due today 02 December 2009

Learning Unit 15 (Due 09 Dec 2009)

Voting

Read the mini-lecture, read the assigned readings and complete written voting document.

Assigned Readings:

(Course Materials) Read the bills presented. Read the testimony for and against each bill. Cast your vote.

Learning Unit 16 (Due 16 Dec 2009)

Summary and Conclusion

Read the mini-lecture and respond to the Discussion Board questions.

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES: CALENDER

Detailed instructions for each writing assignment are found under **"Assignments"** on the course menu and in the appropriate Learning Unit.

09 September 2009	Writing Assignment 1	Duties and Responsibilities of the various offices of the Legislative Branch.
30 September 2009	Writing Assignment 2	Importance of ethics and integrity to both legislators and those who relate to them.
	Proposed Legislation Idea	Respond to Discussion Board Question 1 regarding your proposed topic.
04 November 2009	Writing Assignment 3	<u>Draft</u> Legislation (Bill)
	Writing Assignment 4	<u>Draft</u> Fiscal Note for Proposed Legislation (Bill)
11 November 2009	Writing Assignment 5	<u>Draft</u> proposed testimony – (Pro in support of your bill) and (Con – referring to your assigned classmates bill)
18 November 2009	Writing Assignment 3 & 4	Final Version - of legislative bill with fiscal note – if applicable.
02 December 2009	Writing Assignment 5	Final Version - of Pro and Con testimony